



"THE CARE OF HUMAN LIFE AND HAPPINESS, AND NOT THEIR DESTRUCTION, IS THE ONLY LEGITIMATE OBJECT OF GOOD GOVERNMENT."

-THOMAS JEFFERSON

The Informer

The Tennessee National Guard Counterdrug Task Force



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Making a Difference in Tennessee

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SUMMER YOUTH CAMPS MAKE BIG IMPACT

YMCA, National Guard and Tennessee Titan team up for a POSITIVE BEGINNING

By Capt. David Roberts
Counterdrug Public Affairs

The Counterdrug Task Force supported a Youth Camp this summer sponsored by the YMCA Community Action Project. The camp is called *Positive Beginnings* and works with young boys who are court ordered to attend. Positive Beginnings is a second chance for them, a chance to turn their lives around early on in the game. The boys also got a special visit from someone who knows about the importance of second chances and making the right decisions, Tennessee Titan Albert Haynesworth. (Cont. on Page 2)



Capt. David Roberts

YMCA Staff Michael Check (red shirt), Cory Robinson to his right and Henry Smith (Far Right), Tennessee Guardsmen Sgt. Mark James and Staff Sgt. (Ret.) Reuben Fletcher (in berets) and Tennessee Titan Albert Haynesworth (right rear) pose with students of the Positive Beginnings Camp.

DEFY Camp is a Big Success for four Tennessee Towns

By Capt. David Roberts
Counterdrug Public Affairs

I recently attended the DEFY Camp graduation at the Volunteer Training Site in Smyrna. It was a very emotional event and impressed me what an impact was made on these kids in just two weeks.

One of those impacted was a young girl from Kingsport, Xena Huff. Xena wrote a special thank for our own Task Force soldiers, Sgt. Doug Edmisten and Sgt. Kelly Copeland, who made an impression on her while at the camp. By the end of Xena's speech, it was hard to find a dry eye in the room. (Cont. on Page 2)



Xena Huff of Kingsport reads her speech to Sgt. Kelly Copeland (left) and Sgt. Doug Edmisten during the DEFY graduation ceremony.

Greetings from 2008 Defy youth:
Sgt. Ed and Sgt. Copeland, Defy youth
2008 Appreciate you two for taking
the time out to show us how to
communicate with one other, and how to
solve problems, To listen and learn and
Most of all to show respect to others.
Sgt. Ed and Sgt. Copeland you both show
the leadership and intelligence that
everyone should always carry with them
from this day forward. We love you both
and will always remember "DEFY"

Xena's Speech God Bless you
Both!

Commander, Counterdrug Task Force
Lieutenant Colonel Byron P. Deel
Office: (615) 355-3901
Cell: (615) 390-2680
Fax: (615) 355-3927
email: byron.deel@us.army.mil

Executive Officer
Major Nik Gentry
Office: (615) 355-3902
Cell: (615) 604-0896
Fax: (615) 355-3927
email: niki.gentry1@ng.army.mil

Editor and Public Affairs Officer
Captain David Roberts
Office: (615) 355-3919
Cell: (615) 604-8012
Fax: (615) 355-3927
email: david.roberts7@ng.army.mil

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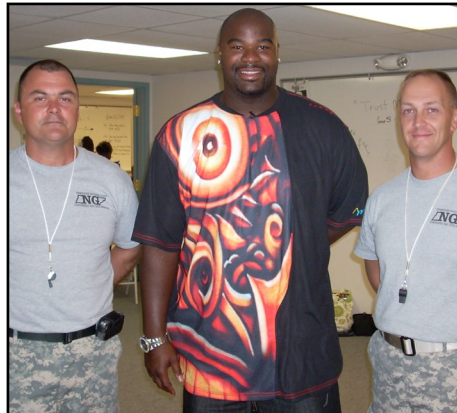
DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION

"POSITIVE BEGINNING"

(Cont. from Page 1)

Professional athletes have long had a strong influence with young people in our society, and this was a great opportunity for that influence to be a positive one. Mr. Haynesworth words were just what a lot of these young men needed to hear.

"It's not what happens, but what you do after it happens that really defines you," Mr. Haynesworth stated, "Anybody can make a mistake, it's how you respond to that mistake that's important".



Sgt. Benny Johnson (left) and Pvt. 1st Class Alan King (right) with Albert Haynesworth at the Positive Beginnings Camp.

DDR Administrator



Captain Linda Williams
Counterdrug HQs, Smyrna
Cell: (615) 948-5874
Email: linda.t.williams@ng.army.mil

FY 2008 STATS

Tennesseans Reached From Oct 07 to July 08

Elementary School.....	20,425
Middle School.....	93,502
High School.....	23,651
College/University.....	3,081
Adults.....	19,141
Total.....	159,800

Youth Camps

The Drug Demand Reduction Team is supporting 16 youth camps this summer. These camps range from court-ordered juveniles to at-risk youth programs. Every camp has DDR mentors to educate on the dangers of drugs and alcohol, and improve each students discipline, physical ability, and self-esteem. Ages range from eight to 17 years with homes in 20 different Tennessee counties. We are very proud to be a part of these motivational programs that help shape Tennessee's youth for a better tomorrow.



Sgt. Benny Johnson (left) oversees an exercise in trust in which Albert Haynesworth falls back into the arms of two students.

"DEFY Camp" (Cont. from Page 1)

DEFY is Drug Education For Youth and the camp was sponsored by four Weed and Seed sites; Johnson City, Kingsport, MLK-Chattanooga, and West-side Chattanooga. Kids from each city got the chance to work together while learning the importance of respecting each other as well as themselves.

The U.S. Attorney's Office oversees the Weed and Seed program and our own Sgt. Doug Edmisten, DDR Liaison to the U.S. Attorney's Office, coordinated all of the events for the camp. The U.S. Attorney for east Tennessee, the Honorable Russ Dedrick, was on hand for the graduation and urged the students to take home the skills they learned at the DEFY camp and apply them to their everyday lives.



U.S. Attorney Russ Dedrick speaks to DEFY students during their graduation ceremony.

DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION

Magazine Fitness Star Motivates USSAA Camp Through Exercise and Life Story

By Capt. David Roberts
Counterdrug Public Affairs

USSAA is a YMCA camp for boys and girls who have athletic ability and have not been in trouble with the law. It helps them hone their physical and academic skills and increase their chances for a college scholarship.

I met with 30 students of the USSAA Youth Camp at 0500 hours (that's 5 AM for normal people). They weren't quite awake or sure what they were in for. What they got was 45 minutes of motivation and hard work, thanks to Staff Sgt. Ken Weichert, fitness editor of Guard Experience magazine. Staff Sgt. Weichert, known to his GX readers as Sgt. Ken, volunteered to help our DDR Team support the USSAA Camp and share his inspirational story with these young men.



Sgt. KEN starts out the workout session with stretching exercises (above) and shares his personal experiences with the boys afterwards (below left).

Leading the nation in sacks his senior year of high school, Sgt. Ken had scholarship offers to 17 colleges and universities. However, a tragic back injury cut his football career short. Through years of physical therapy and hard work, he was able to bring himself back to a high level of fitness, eventually joining the National Guard. Sgt. Ken's story was one the boys could relate to, and with it he showed them anything is possible if you make the right decisions. That included working hard and living a healthy and drug-free life style to reach your goals. Sgt. Ken told the students he would be back to check on their progress and do one more workout before they graduated.



Sgt. Patrick Falkenburg of the Counterdrug Task Force gives encouragement during the workout.

Youth Court Services C.A.M.P. is a Second Chance for Students

By Capt. Linda Williams
DDR Administrator

The Counterdrug Task Force and the Juvenile Court Services for Roane, McMinn, Bledsoe, Rhea and Grundy Counties are holding C.A.M.P. this summer; the Childrens Attitude Motivation Program.

C.A.M.P. is a six to eight week program working to get juvenile offenders on track to being healthy, productive citizens. The resident phase is a week long and held at the Volunteer Training Site in Smyrna. The remainder of the camp is held at each counties high school from seven in the morning until five in the afternoon.



Sgt. Frank Yates-Matoy (far left) leads students in early morning exercises.

Our DDR Team has 16 personnel dedicated to C.A.M.P. as mentors for the students through both the resident phase and at their respective schools.

C.A.M.P. focuses on discipline, self-esteem, positive decision making and responsibility. Students also receive tutorial help such as Math, English and introduction to Spanish.

DRUG SUPPLY REDUCTION**** Names of personnel and locations are withheld for operational security ******Major Mexican Marijuana Operation Found in Cherokee Forest****Thousands of Plants Seized in Cocke County****By Britney Bailey
Channel 10 News, Knoxville**

Around 10 a.m. Monday, helicopter pilots spotted hundreds of thousands of marijuana plants growing in the Cherokee National Forest in Cocke County. They alerted officers on the ground, and the crew trekked more than a mile into the forest from Interstate 40, where they came upon what they call a DTO, or drug trafficking organization.

"They just live in it, move in, grow, and that's all they're there to do is grow marijuana," Special Agent Jason Poore said of the growers.

Poore is part of the Governor's Task Force on Marijuana Eradication, which is a cooperation among several agencies, including the Alcohol Beverage Commission, Tennessee Highway Patrol, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and the National Guard Counter Drug Task Force.

Poore says the task force is seeing more and more of the DTOs, which he says are usually manned by illegal immigrants who spend four months at a time doing nothing but harvesting the crops.

Monday's bust netted around 357,500 marijuana plants, which were very young. Poore says, if they had been allowed to grow and fully mature, the plants could have been worth more than \$700 million on the street.

"Everybody gets up that's got jobs, and they go and they pay taxes, they do normal things, where these guys, they get up every day, they water their marijuana, they stay with it four months out of the year, and they're gonna bring in millions of dollars tax-free that the rest of us have to pay taxes on," Poore said. "Aside from that, this is the same drugs that's getting to the kids, different people across the state, and across the U.S."

No one was guarding the plants when authorities showed up Monday. They say several agencies will now work to track down those responsible.



An aerial view showing part of the National Forest cleared for growing marijuana grow (above) and a close up of one of the illegal plants (above left).

FY 2008 SEIZURES**From Oct 2007 to July 2008**

**** Seizure information is from drug cases that were supported by the Counterdrug Task Force through Criminal Analysis, Ground or Aerial Reconnaissance.**

Cocaine (lbs.).....	820.2
Crack Cocaine (lbs.)	305.9
Meth (lbs.).....	276.5
Meth Labs.....	322
Heroin (lbs.).....	113
Khat (lbs.).....	4,394
Arrests.....	632
Vehicles.....	65
Weapons.....	111
Proc. Marijuana (lbs.).....	8,270
Marijuana (Plants).....	391,199
Currency.....	\$10,855,237

**Illegals Living in Marijuana Sites on the Rise in Tenn.****By Capt. Jay Richards
Operations Officer**

The recent discovery and destruction of 357,500 marijuana plants in the Cherokee National Forest is further evidence that Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations are using public lands in Tennessee. Marijuana production on public lands has risen due to increased law enforcement efforts and the remote and vast amount of land available.

Since 1996, Mexican DTOs that use public lands for growing marijuana have steadily moved east from California. They go to great lengths to protect their grow sites including camouflage, posting armed guards and emplacing dangerous traps. Additionally, these groups are causing significant environmental damage through cutting down trees, using unregulated pesticides and fertilizers from Mexico, and leaving behind trash.

This new drug threat is a significant challenge to law enforcement, public safety, and the environment. The Counterdrug Task Force is committed to continued partnership with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to develop comprehensive strategies to combat this rising threat.